Something Old, Something New

Guerrillas, Terrorists, and Intelligence Analysis

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THE UNITED STATES and its coalition allies are currently engaged in counterinsurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq. While these are clearly different countries and insurgencies, they have some common features. The guerrilla war in Afghanistan grew from the remnants of the Taliban movement—a loose confederation of Pashtun tribesmen under an overarching Islamic fundamentalist banner. The Taliban's Islamic Emirate was devoted to Pashtun dominance and the restoration of 12th-century Islamic practices.

Foreigners from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and other Sunni Arab and non-Arab cultures joined the Taliban. Even Chechens, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan adherents, and Uighurs from China joined the foreign contingent, often as part of al-Qaeda. The Taliban was not a guerrilla force; it was a conventional force that fought and deployed in linear fashion using light-cavalry tactics based on pickup trucks and leftover Soviet equipment. U.S. Special Forces, working with the main ground forces of the Afghan Northern Alliance and strike aircraft, quickly dismantled the force.

The primary Taliban combatant was not the Mujahideen warrior who had fought the Soviets for over 9 years, although many of the commanders were. The primary Taliban combatant was a young man who had grown up in refugee camps while his male relatives were fighting the Soviet 40th Army.

Today, the Taliban is a fragmented force consisting of independent bands that call themselves Taliban but have little allegiance to the original Taliban leader. These Taliban, unable to match Western coalition forces in technology or conventional combat, have reverted to terrorism and guerrilla warfare. Al-Qaeda has withdrawn from most of the direct combat and has assumed an advisory and training role.

The guerrilla war remains local, Pashtun, Sunni, and disjointed, and with little apparent hierarchy and organization. The war is primarily rural, and the guerrillas enjoy sanctuary along Afghanistan's eastern border with Pakistan. Funding is local, with some outside donations, but the bulk now comes from the drug trade. Maintaining the drug trade often justifies guerrilla activity.

The current Iraqi guerrilla war grew from a defeated hierarchical party-state structure. The army officer corps, Baathist party, and Fedayeen militia were secular state institutions drawn primarily from the ruling minority—Sunni Arab peoples. Much of the hierarchy and interrelations of the state structure remain intact in the remnant guerrilla organization. Foreign combatants, including al-Qaeda members and Chechens, have entered Iraq to fight the

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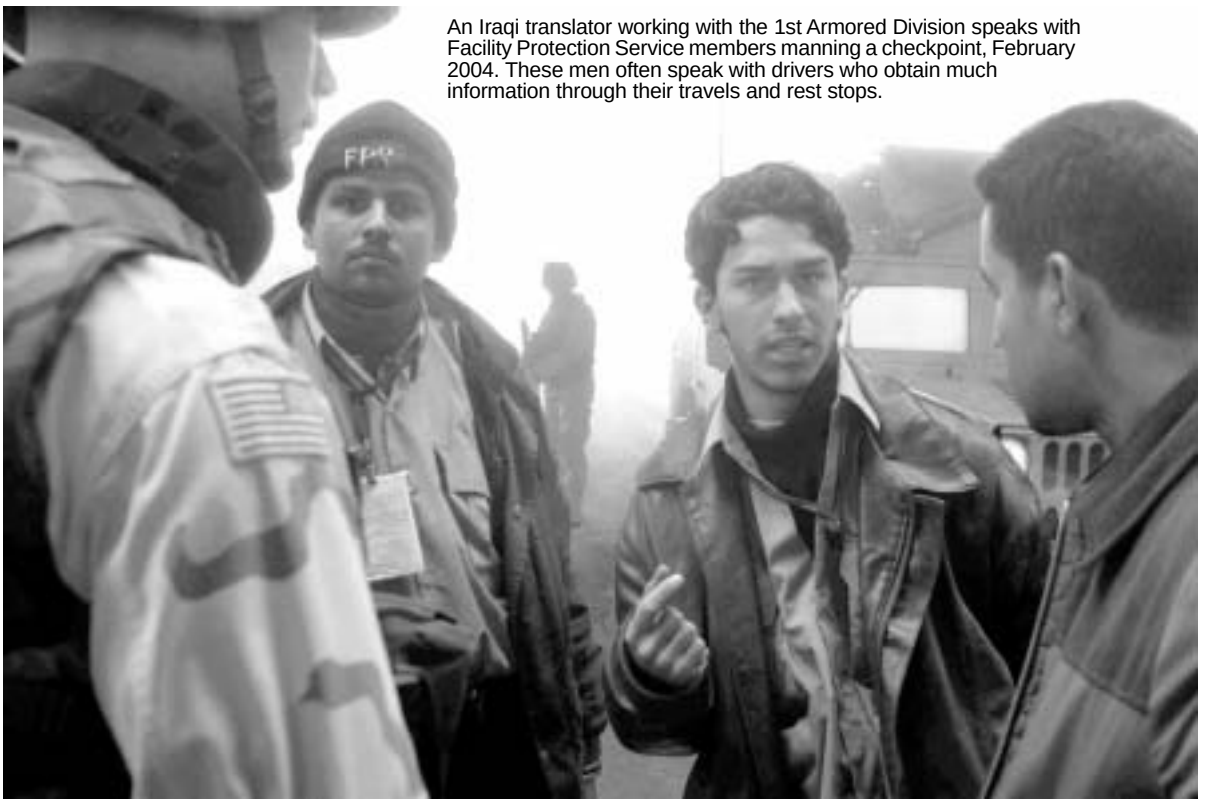

An Iraqi translator working with the 1st Armored Division speaks with Facility Protection Service members manning a checkpoint, February 2004. These men often speak with drivers who obtain much information through their travels and rest stops.

coalition. They do not blend in well, however, and many have since left or assumed specialized support roles such as bomb manufacturer, suicide bomber, or instructor.

The Iraqi combatants have little experience in fighting as actual guerrillas, but some do have counterinsurgency experience against Kurds and Shia Iraqis. The insurgency has a strong urban component, particularly in Baghdad, Mosul, Fallujah, Al Sulaymaniyah, Samarra, and Tikrit. The rural guerrilla war is primarily restricted to the Sunni triangle west-northwest of Baghdad. The urban guerrillas rely primarily on improvised explosive devices (IEDs) because their marksmanship is not good. Iraqi guerrillas lack a ready sanctuary, but they are well funded with billions of U.S. dollars held by Iraq's former leaders. They have ready access to large stocks of weapons and explosives.

The military intelligence effort devoted to combating either insurgency has little in common with conventional intelligence operations in support of conventional maneuver war. Intelligence preparation of the battlefield, order of battle, templating forces, signals intelligence; measurement and signature intelligence; and electronic intelligence take different forms or are not applicable. The S2 or G2 has a different type of war and needs to take a different approach to dealing with it, much as the U.S. approach to peacekeeping evolved during the past decade.[1]

The S2 and G2 are involved in a form of police investigative work, specifically police investigations dealing with gangs and narcotrafficers. Association matrixes, network analysis, cultural analysis, genealogy, event-pattern analysis, language-pattern analysis, traffic-flow analysis, and financial-transaction analysis are police tools that should be staples of the intelligence effort in a counterinsurgency.[2] Adopting these tools does not imply adopting accompanying restrictions on combat lethality or local rules of engagement that apply to police forces.

Afghanistan now has an elected civilian government, and there will be one in Iraq. Converting former police states to those governed by rule of law will cause many problems, but new Afghan and Iraqi police forces are being trained and equipped to deal with local problems. The collection efforts of local police forces must also be integrated into the intelligence process. The military and police conduct covert and overt collection for different functions and under different rules. Still, raw data and intelligence produced might be mutually supportive.

Some advocate harsh, brutish measures to collect useful intelligence against terrorists and guerrillas.

They point to the efficacy of torture and extraordinary means employed by the French during the 1957 battle for Algiers, concentrating on its tactical success and ignoring its strategic failure.[3] This politically charged argument influenced the French presidential election of 2002. Proper investigative tools and interrogation techniques, a well-organized intelligence database, and well-trained soldiers and police should obviate and prevent any such misguided shortcuts.

Gang Warfare

Charting the guerrillas' orders of battle, tables of organization and equipment, and line and block charts is fantasy in Afghanistan and nearly so in Iraq. In these insurgencies, intelligence personnel are tracking gangs, not constituted forces. The problem is equivalent to police determining who are in which gangs, what territories they control, and what armaments, tactics, logistics, and patterns they use. Police and Drug Enforcement Administration investigators know how to do this because they have been doing it for years.

Culture counts, and intelligence personnel need to understand the language, history, and culture of the area in which they must work. Army foreign area officers (FAOs) are trained in these areas and need to be assigned to brigades, not hoarded at senior headquarters. FAOs are "the unconventional men . . . , largely out of sight . . . , carrying the load and transforming the world order."[4] FAOs are essential to understanding the culture, but problems remain, even when good FAOs are present.

The nature of Afghan and Iraqi societies makes the populace expert at hiding, dissimulating, and deceiving. Loyalties are to family, close associates, fellow villagers, and clan or tribal members. Census data are so dated as to be almost useless. In the case of Iraq, Baathist party membership rosters, military manning charts, police records, and Fedayeen registration books are useful; however, prime intelligence is derived from analysis of family genealogies, development of association matrixes, and contact network charts (link analysis). These techniques, of course, are less applicable to outsiders and border crossers.

Two things the police have going for them are the beat cop who has worked the neighborhood for years and police snitches who, for a fee or a favor, keep the police informed. Overt and covert closed-circuit TV (CCTV) networks, close liaison with the local police department, development of agent networks, and detailed data files on known guerrillas help the intelligence section gain local insight fast. Information technology can also help. Specialists can intercept, track, and triangulate cell phone calls. The Russians killed Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudaev with a beam-riding missile that locked onto his cell phone transmission. Geographic Information Systems software can use the Global Positioning System to locate sites of past ambushes and IED attacks and calculate possible future attack sites, assembly areas, safe houses, and residences. Pattern-analysis mapping software can predict sites and likely times of attack.[5]

Geographic profiling, a police technique that combines spatial analysis and psychological behavior patterns of criminals, looks at such factors as distance to the crime, demographics, landscape analysis, pattern analysis, crime scene forensic analysis, and psychological criminal profiling. Ambushes, raids, IED and mortar attacks, sniping attacks, and other guerrilla actions are complex serial crimes. Police can use geographic profiling to identify separate groups or group members, provide theoretical profiles, determine likely residences or likely attack times, routes, and tactics.

Property ownership and mapping, also a valuable tool in counterinsurgency, can identify community power brokers, vested interests, and family connections. Financial transactions, cell phone transmissions, and travel patterns can also provide valuable data to intelligence analysts. Finding the guerrilla is a function of detective work. Who is he? Who does he work with? Who are members of his family, and where do they live? What is his background? Who are his associates?

Extensive data files are a boring but necessary part of finding the guerrilla. However, computer data-mining can ease the job considerably by providing assistance in incident (crime scene) analysis, optimum force deployment, risk assessment, behavioral analysis, DNA analysis, force protection, and internet and infrastructure protection.[6] All the tools of police investigation are relevant. Technology makes it easier, but a lot of old-fashioned footwork and analysis is still required. Military lawyers and the supporting psychological operations (PSYOP) and civil affairs units should be briefed regularly and visited to prevent incidents and turf issues.

The 4th Infantry Division (ID) captured Saddam Hussein based on intelligence developed from link-pattern analysis. The 4th ID is the most modernized, digitized, and computerized division in the Army, yet

A soldier lifts a styrofoam lid covering the hole where former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was hiding, 13 December 2003. Link pattern analysis by the 4th Infantry Division brought the soldiers to this location in Ad Dawr, Iraq.

intelligence personnel who did the link-pattern analysis did it the tedious, old-fashioned way, using pads of butcher-board paper, yellow stickies, and a large wall chart.[7] Some dedicated intelligence personnel did a brilliant job, but time and energy could have been greatly reduced with current software applications and computerized databases.

Intelligence in a counterinsurgency needs a national computerized database that can be readily shared by the police and coalition military. Doing this requires uniformity in software and procedures. The database should also have a reach-back capability. A database is only as good as its data, so standard forms for felony tracking and debriefing are essential. The database should allow ready access to gang intelligence, crime/event mapping, modus operandi, and routine data such as property ownership, and telephone and financial records. Existing databases, such as those of the National Agency Center, National Criminal Investigation Service, and even LexisNexis, a commercial database for legal and other research, could serve as models.

Investigative software should be available to all subscribers, compatible with the national database, and have compartmented capabilities for classified material. Analyzed intelligence and raw data should be available on the national database. Naturally, the base should be dual-language so the host nation can participate and eventually take it over. The base should be Web-enabled and available to units training in the United States before deployment to the area.

The police Real Analytical Intelligence Database (RAID) software might be a good start point. RAID tracks people, vehicles, weapons, events, and financial data; handles partial numbers, genealogies, and associations; links events to people and things; and has an Analyst's Notebook for link-pattern analysis. Although RAID is designed for local law enforcement, it is Web-enabled, which gives it a statewide and nationwide capability. PATHFINDER and the Analyst's Notebook are two Department of Defense software programs that can be modified to perform many of the same tasks.

To train analysts to work with such software and modern investigative techniques is a separate issue. Analysts require training in information-gathering, data-mining, data development, case management,

link-flow-event analysis, detecting hidden assets, postseizure analysis, matrix development, chart development, pattern analysis, alternative competing hypotheses, and communications analysis. Anacapa Sciences, Incorporated, and regional High-Intensity Drug Traffic Area offices run excellent police-analyst courses. The Defense Intelligence Agency and the U.S. Northern Command Intelligence Detachment at Fort Leavenworth run similar excellent military-analyst courses.

Nontechnical police methods also exist that could apply to counterinsurgency. The local police must be honest and respected. Police departments need to be well equipped and well trained. Police integrity is key, so higher pay, background checks, drug testing, and anticorruption units are essential, and police captains need to be accountable for the crime rates in their precincts. Confidential informants who produce information should be paid on time and their identities protected. The sites of guerrilla attacks need to be treated as crime scenes, and forensic specialists need to work for or with the intelligence community. Liaison between the police and the intelligence community is essential—just as it is among intelligence offices. Social services also play a role. Guerrillas and other criminals do not hang out in neighborhoods that are clean, safe, and in good repair.

Translators and Interrogators

Human intelligence (HUMINT) is the driving force in intelligence production and analysis in a counterinsurgency. The military does not have nearly enough FAOs, translators, and interrogators who can speak the dominant languages (Dari, Pashtu, Uzbek, Urdu, Arabic, Kurdish, Assyrian, and Farsi) in these two insurgencies. Mastery of the primary form of the language is not always enough, because local dialects frustrate effective communication. Furthermore, soldier/linguists often have little training in the culture, history, and customs of the regions.

Intelligence cells are frequently at the mercy of contract translators whose command of English (and even sometimes the target language) is spotty. If the translator is local, he has better community access and acceptance but is subject to local threats and blackmail. If the translator is an outsider, he is less a target for threats and blackmail, but also less trusted and accepted by the locals. Often people will not want to speak through a local translator because they are providing information they might not want others to know. They prefer to talk to uniformed personnel. Vetting of translators is tricky and often means that the translator never gets inside intelligence offices. Barring translators from intelligence offices limits translator input.

Working with a translator is a process that requires time and rehearsal. Just because a person speaks English and the target language does not mean he is literate. In Iraq, 60 percent of males and 70 percent of females are not educated above the 8th grade. In Afghanistan, the literacy rate is below 10 percent.

The translator must understand the topic before he can interpret the conversation correctly. The translator will frequently need crash training in military topics, civil engineering, medical treatments, or banking laws before he can serve effectively in specialized areas. Interviews should be rehearsed to ensure the translator understands the topic of conversation and has time to master unfamiliar vocabulary.

The user and translator must develop a close relationship so translators feel they have the freedom to criticize and offer constructive suggestions. (Please do not broadcast PSYOP messages during the call for prayer. Please tell your soldiers to remove their sunglasses when they talk to people. Please tell your soldiers not to point their guns at people at checkpoints.) The interrogator should schedule more time for conversations because translated conversations normally take three times as long as the same conversation would between native speakers. The translator also needs frequent breaks. Nonstop translation work is tiring, and tired translators make mistakes. Further, using multiple translators provides checks and balances to the agendas translators have—and each ethnic and religious group has its own agenda.

Body language is another important part of communication, particularly when working through a translator. Both parties have plenty of time to study the other's body language while the translator is working both sides of the conversation. Knowing and controlling body language can help sell the message.

It is essential to know how accurate a translator is, but determining this is difficult. The easiest way is to have a fluent U.S. translator monitor the translator. If a good U.S. translator is not available, the interrogator can make a videotape to evaluate later. Many translators want to please the participants in a conversation, so they shade the conversation, telling each side what they want to hear. Many trans-

A soldier of the Afghan National Army translates what a local Afghan man is saying to a 19th Special Forces Group sergeant during a Medical Civil Action Program visit to Policharki, Afghanistan, 5 February 2003.

lators are unaware of the nuances of the English language, so "request" might become "demand." Honest translations are critical.

The translator should not be used in a "good cop, bad cop" role. That is a task for interrogators. The translator must maintain a neutral posture and be viewed as a conduit of information, not part of the enforcement regime.

Patrols, Checkpoints, and Drivers

Patrols, checkpoints, drivers, and pilots can generate excellent HUMINT. However, getting the data is not an automatic process. All participants have to be regularly briefed as to what they are looking for. (What is taking place outside this mosque today? Are weapons openly displayed there? Are there more or fewer people outside the mosque than normal? How many? How did the people react to your presence near the mosque? Are there any banners displayed by the mosque? What does your translator tell you that they say? Was the mosque loudspeaker used for anything besides the call to prayer? What did the translator say the loudspeaker message was? Was anyone wearing headbands or distinctive clothing near the mosque? Did anything strike you as unusual?)

Debriefing is crucial and easily neglected. Soldiers want to maintain their equipment and get some chow and rest after a mission, but the mission is not over until participants are debriefed. Timely, professional debriefing is essential because it provides information, keeps observers focused, and keeps the intelligence effort tuned to the tactical arena where the counterinsurgency is fought. Of course, there is overt collection and covert collection. A good agent net is also essential, and agents should be trained, assigned targets, briefed, and debriefed just as carefully as the soldiers in the patrol.

Checkpoints can be a good source of information. Permanent vehicle checkpoints are not as effective as mobile vehicle checkpoints because people who cannot pass a checkpoint will normally avoid it. People are more accepting of a vehicle checkpoint than a pedestrian one. While the primary objective of the vehicle checkpoint is to interdict supplies, weapons, and likely enemies, the primary objective of the pedestrian checkpoint is to gain information. Professional behavior by checkpoint personnel is especially important. Tips for successful pedestrian checkpoints include the following:

- Interview pedestrians individually and privately. Covert CCTV taping of the interview can be used to counter charges of inhumane treatment.
- Give each person approximately the same amount of time regardless of whether they are providing information or not. Have a system in place so individuals with lots of information can easily and

Iraqis detained and held at Forward Observation Base (FOB) Eagle after a mortar tube and mortar rounds were found in their possession in a village near Balad, Iraq, 10 October 2003. The mortar was aimed toward FOB Eagle, which had come under attack that morning. Firm handling of prisoners should not translate into unnecessary harshness, which is counterproductive to good HUMINT. Proper investigative tools and interrogation techniques, a well-organized intelligence database, and well-trained soldiers and police should obviate and prevent any such misguided shortcuts.

confidentially contact the unit for a lengthy debriefing.

- Offer each individual coffee, tea, cigarettes, candy, or other comfort items as appropriate.
- Apologize for and explain the need for the interview or brief search.
- Organize and control the waiting area. Provide seating and place a polite, patient person in charge of it. Secure the area against attack.
- Maintain tight security but do not openly brandish weapons.

- Use a trained interrogator.
- Do not try to control too large an area or stay in one place too long.
- Do not act immediately on information a pedestrian provides if that would compromise the pedestrian's safety or future cooperation.
- Have women present when interviewing women and have women search women.[8]

Information Sharing

The U.S. intelligence community is large and pervasive. Unfortunately, various agencies run their intelligence data and analysis in bureaucratic stovepipes, which run straight from the tactical level to the highest strategic levels with little sharing along the way. In theory, the community is supposed to share intelligence at the highest strategic level and then pass that information back down to the people who need it. In practice, this seldom happens. Raw data are seldom passed back—just agreed-on intelligence. Agreed-on intelligence is a homogenized product from which dissenting views and contradicting evidence has been removed or discounted so the community can have a common view. This practice might serve policy-level intelligence customers, but it does not provide timely, relevant intelligence to the tactical user.

If intelligence does come back down the stovepipe, it often arrives too late. Indeed, the tactical user often lacks clearances and tickets to get the approved product. Undersecretary of Defense Stephen Cambone is trying to change this pattern, but he has to fight decades of practice, procedures, and training to do so.[9]

The tactical intelligence officer needs to meet, visit, and cultivate counterparts in other agencies to access raw data and preliminary analysis as it goes up the various stovepipes. Conversely, the tactical intelligence officer needs to reciprocate so the relationship is mutually supportive. Other intelligence agencies also experience difficulties with the stovepipes.

Intelligence sharing extends to neighboring units, coalition partners, sister services, and combat service and combat service support units. Military police and truck drivers see more of the countryside than anyone and should be a prime source of information.

Getting on Top

Intelligence in counterinsurgency, which has always been a tough job, differs from intelligence for maneuver war in its more protracted nature and requirement to function more in a cultural context. Technology and modern police investigative techniques can help. Intelligence data can be generated by traditional means (such as patrols and agents), gathered as events occur, or helped along. Lots of data are necessary. Anti-American rallies should be filmed and individuals identified for follow-up action. DNA and voice files can be initiated. Ground and air sensors have improved markedly over the past decade and should be used and maintained. Cellular telephones and computer communications are an exploitable technology. Efforts should be made to make sure that these are available for the general populace and potential guerrilla alike.

Bribes and rewards often produce results if they are believed and do not get the informer killed. A good local agent network remains an essential part of counterguerrilla work. If intelligence determines that the guerrilla is buying something distinctive (name-brand backpacks, mountain boots, or explosives), perhaps electronic tags or chemical tags could be inserted before delivery. There are many ways to find the guerrilla. A comprehensive, coordinated approach, using the latest science and proven techniques, can do just that. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Timothy L. Thomas, "Preventing Conflict Through Information Technology," *Military Review* (December 1998/January-February 1999): 44-57, and "IT Requirements for Peacekeeping," *Military Review* (September-October 2001): 29.
2. Much of the material in this article comes from interviews with CW4 Trammell R. Davis; Captain Pat Grove, Kansas City Police Intelligence Center; Jose Jimenez, Retired Police Lieutenant, New York Police Department; Tom Mink, Senior Security Specialist, Commerce Bank; Major Robert Peters, Military Intelligence, U.S. Command and General Staff College; Detective Phil Stockard; Midwest High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA); Sam Thompson, Midwest HIDTA; Sergeant Greg Volker, Kansas City Police Department; and Detective Shelly Volker, Midwest HIDTA. The author retains responsibility for the contents of the article.
3. Bruce Hoffman, "A Nasty Business," *The Atlantic Monthly* (January 2002).
4. Robert Kaplan, "The Man Who Would Be Khan," *The Atlantic Monthly* (March 2004): 56.
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8. Geoffrey B. Demarest, "Tactical Intelligence in Low Intensity Conflict," *Military Intelligence* (October-December 1985): 19.
9. Glenn W. Goodman, Jr., "Intelligence on Demand: An Interview with Stephen Cambone, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence," *The ISR Journal* (1 December 2003).

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